

Trials of the Islamic Education Learning Model in Indonesian Universities: A Sufistic Approach as An Alternative

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Abstract

The students of Indonesia University of Education (UPI) and Bandung Islamic University (UNISBA) typically practice religion as it was received from their parents and socio-religious environment. They *Salat*, which is the main prayer of Islam, simply abort their obligations, and after praying, immediately leave their prayer mats without making *dhikr* or remembering God first. Furthermore, they do not understand *khushu` Salat*, which involves remembering God throughout the prayer, along with the meaning of *dhikr*, and the importance of a *Murshid*, which is the Grand Shaykh of Sufi Order. They also view Sufism as non-Islamic teaching and are cynical about the practitioners. Therefore, this study aims to examine the effectiveness of the Sufistic learning model in Islamic Religious Education to improve students' understanding of these teachings in a substantive and tolerant manner. This research used an R&D approach, and the stage that was performed involved the preparation of a draft model and associated trials. Meanwhile, the learning used the *madhhab* typology approach of the Sufi and *Shari`a* Islamic models. The trial results showed that the Sufistic approach was effective in increasing students' understanding of Islamic teachings in a substantive and tolerant manner. Before learning, students were unaware of Sufi Islam and viewed it as a foreign influence. Also, they did not understand *khushu` prayers*, comprehend the importance of *dhikr*, nor that of learning from *Murshid*. After learning, they understood Sufism, accepted the teachings and did not consider them to be foreign influences, and also recognized Islam in a substantive and tolerant manner. Therefore, the Sufism approach is improving the quality of religion and tolerance of students, with the implication that the model is an alternative in learning Islamic education at universities.

Objective: This study aims to examine the effectiveness of the Sufistic learning model in Islamic Religious Education to improve students' understanding of Islamic teachings in a substantive and tolerant manner.

Methods: A research and development (R&D) approach, which was performed in the preparation of a draft model and associated trials, was used. Meanwhile, the learning employed the *madhhab* typology approach of the Sufi and *Shari`a* Islamic model.

Results: The trial results showed that the Sufistic approach in Islamic Education was effective in increasing students' understanding of Islamic teachings in a substantive and tolerant manner. Before learning, students unfamiliar with Sufi Islam, saw it as a foreign influence, and did not understand *khushu` Salat*, which involves remembering God throughout the prayer. Also, they considered *dhikr*, which means to remember God, and learning from *Murshid* as unimportant. However, they understood Sufism, accepted it as Islamic teachings and not foreign influences, and recognized the religion in a substantive and tolerant manner after the learning process.

Conclusion: The Sufism approach in Islamic Education has succeeded in improving the quality of religion and tolerance of students.

Keywords: religious education at universities, the *Madhhab* typology approach of the Sufi and *Shari`a* Islamic, Islamic substantive, religious tolerance

1. Introduction

Although Sufism is widely known in the Muslim community, only some people understand and practice it, while General Islam is mostly performed by the public. Along with increasing age and religious education, some persons observe Islam and perform their lives in a Sufistic way.

Islam in Indonesia has unique characteristics that are inseparable from Sufism and the *Tariqa* or Sufi Order. This practice played a large role in entering and developing Islam in the archipelago (Howell, 2001; Ghaffar, 2015). Furthermore, the XVII-XVIII centuries were the golden era of Sufism in Indonesia (Taufani, 2018), and these teachings have remained alive in the modern age. Although Sufis in the 21st century can compete globally, and some are materially rich, they are not dazzled by wealth and position (Andarwati, 2016).

Sufism and *Tariqa* are significant esoteric dimensions in the practice's perfection of Islamic teachings (Siregar, 2012), while *Shari'a* is exoteric. The practice of these two dimensions can perfect physical birth (Mannan, 2018) thus, the rejection of Sufism has no place in Indonesia. Sufism and *Tariqa* have four aspects that are very useful for life, namely mystical, ethical, popular, and communal. While the mystical dimension leads a Sufi to "be with God," the ethical equivalent leads people to behave well towards "fellow human beings." The popular dimension guides persons to "be together in the way of Allah," while the communal counterpart guides one to "be with fellow Sufis" (Riyadi, 2018).

However, there was a later rejection of Sufism, as some accused this practice of being influenced by Christianity and Greek philosophy (Hilal, 2002: 19-20), as well as Indian religion (Rahmatul Husni, 2017). Sufism was accused of not having an Islam origin (Ibrahim, 2002: 83-100), an allegation that was rejected by the followers of this practice, as according to Harun Nasution, Sufism and the *Tariqa* have a firm basis in Islamic teachings (Harun Nasution, 1990: 1-12). Moreover, *Tariqa* thrives in Indonesia and the largest Islamic organization in this country (NU), which was created to be autonomous, houses this order (Kholid, 2018). Meanwhile, some persons proposed that Sufism should be entered into the Islamic Education Institute curriculum (Suteja, 2017) as the benefits of Sufism and *Tariqa* were observed in several research results. *Salat* and *dhikr*, which are the major forms of Sufism charity can increase emotional intelligence, self-control, and eliminate stress (Harmathilda H. Soleh, 2017). Furthermore, workers in Pontianak, as well as the observers and congregation of Qadiriyyah Naqsyabandiyah *Tariqa* (TQN), are considered to have noble characters. They particularly exhibit *siddiq*, which translates to righteousness, and *amanah*, meaning trust because they believe in being constantly supervised by God (Fatmawati, 2013). Also, they experience significant peace of mind before and after receiving *dhikr* training for the elderly (Kumala *et al.*, 2017).

How is Islamic Religious Education (PAI) in schools and colleges?

PAI, like other religious education, is considered to have failed to build a substantive and tolerant religiosity. The results of research in 2006 and 2009 show that the style of religious thinking in West Java tends to be exclusive and intolerant (Rahmat, 2012), and studies in 2019 and 2020 reveal similar results. More than half of UPI students are intolerant of other religions and minority Islamic schools. However, through changes in the learning model, by approaching the study of religions and the typology of schools, increasing their tolerance was successful (Rahmat *et al.*, 2019; Rahmat *et al.*, 2020). This situation was the same at schools, as approximately half of the high school pupils in big cities, such as Jakarta, Bandung, and Surabaya were intolerant (Firdaus & Rahmat, 2016). The research results from SMP were interesting, as although the Muslim students in West Java were much more religious concerning theology and rituals than the Christians, they were intolerant. Hence, the Christian students were much more tolerant than Muslims but less religious, and no correlation was found between religiosity and tolerance (Rizal & Rahmat, 2019). Criticism of Religious Education in the United Kingdom builds exclusive diversity but fails to engender mutual understanding among adherents (Clayton & Stevens, 2018). Meanwhile, they recommended the Education of Religions. However, their criticism of the failure of education in Great Britain is not quite right, as Dinham & Shaw, as well as the Commission on RE, report that this teaching fosters mutual understanding and religious tolerance (Barnes, 2020).

Although PAI uses various approaches in higher education, a Sufistic method seems more appropriate to improve the quality of a substantive and tolerant religion.

2. Methods

This study aims to examine the effectiveness of the Sufistic learning model in increasing PAI students' understanding of Islamic teachings in a substantive and tolerant manner. An R&D approach was employed, which comprised three stages, namely preliminary studies, which involve the theoretical study and drafting of models, as well as trials, which are limited and broader, and validation (Sukmadinata, 2009). Hence, the research conducted used only a preliminary study stage and limited model trials. The model was drafted by using the *madhhab* typology of the Sufi, which combines the inner and outer aspects of worship, as well as *Shari'a* Islamic teachings. Meanwhile, *Shari'a* Islam only emphasizes the outer aspects, e.g. prayer, where the birth aspect is body worship. This worship is in the form of standing, bowing, prostration, and sitting facing the Qibla, accompanied by prayer recitation from *takbiratul ihram* to greeting. Conversely, the inner aspect involves presenting God in the heart and remembering Him throughout the prayer.

The *madhhab* or school typology was adapted from the method of Ali Shari`a's religion, which stated that this approach was a special technique and is useful for studying religions. This method has two important characteristics, which are identifying the main religious aspects, such as God, Prophet, and Holy Scriptures, while the second compares them with similar forms in other religions (Dabla, 1992). The main purpose of this method is to improve the understanding of communities for their religion and the tolerance of others. Meanwhile, the main objective of the typology method was to enhance the understanding of Muslims for their *madhhabs* by comparing them objectively with other schools and increasing their tolerance towards other Islamic groups.

The meaning of *madhhab* in the typology method is "real schools in society," not classical or theoretical schools. Here, the characteristics of the school are teachings, congregations, scholars, and educational institutions, e.g., Sunni Islam-Shi'a Islam, NU-Muhammadiyah, also includes Shari`a Sufi-Islam. In Indonesia, Sufi and general Islam have unique teachings, which combine the physical and mental aspects of worship. Also, there are congregations, especially *Tariqa* followers, as well as scholars, particularly Murshid Teachers, and educational institutions from kindergarten and elementary to university. The *madhhab* typology method has two important characteristics, which are to identify the main aspects of the school and to compare them with others. This study used the importance of *khushu`* prayer, which involves presenting God in the heart during the prayer, *dhikr*, which means remembering God, and the Murshid Teacher as the main aspects.

A typology method for the Sufi-Islamic Shari`a school of typology was drafted and tested in 6 PAI lectures for six (6) weeks in the odd semester of 2019-2020 at UPI and UNISBA. Two classes were each selected, which include the Accounting study program for both schools, as well as Islamic Religious Education for UPI, and Islamic Communication & Broadcasting for UNISBA, individually.

Then, a qualitative-evaluative data analysis was performed by recording student responses to the typical teachings of Sufi Islam during the six lectures. Three major questions were asked, which were the importance of the *khushu`* prayer, the significance of *dhikr*, especially during prayer and the remembrance afterward, as well as the need for Muslims to have Murshid Teachers or authoritative scholars. The answers expected from students were that prayers must be done with *khushu`*, *dhikr* was important during and after prayer, and that it was necessary to learn from authoritative scholars, either Murshid Teachers or not, to understand true Islam.

3. Results

3.1 The Existence of Sufism and Tariqa

Based on the literature review, there have been debates about the pros and cons of Sufism. Anti-Sufism groups, such as Hilal, say that the core of this practice is the *Ma`rifat bi Allāh*, which is to recognize God. It is said that this core is achieved through *kashaf*, meaning God reveals himself, even though this concept is the same as the gnosis process of Greek Philosophy (Hilal, 2002: 19-20). Meanwhile, the book owned by Ibrahim and titled *Tasawuf dan Pengaruh Asing*, meaning Sufism and Foreign Influence, states that the life of the Sufi is not derived from Islam (Ibrahim, 2002: 83-100). "The teachings of Sufism are 'by-products' originating from the Hindu Upanishads and Vedanta, as well as Hellenism traditions, Christian mysticism, Neo-Platonism, or Stoicism" (Rahmatul Husni, 2017). Anwar also wrote books, which were titled "*Kenapa harus tasawuf, bukankah ada akhlak?*" meaning "Why should Sufism, aren't there morals?" and three others under the umbrella of "*Tasawuf tanpa Tarekat*," which translates to "Sufism without *Tariqa*". This author further stressed that committing Sufism is moral (Anwar, 2002: 3-8), while Tasawuf challengers further argue that Sufis cannot account for their eschatic remarks (Iu Rusliana, 2016).

Harun Nasution strongly denied that Sufism originated from outside of Islam, and these views can be summarized in a few points. This scholar argues that The Prophet SAW lived as a Sufi, and Khulafa al-Rāshidīn (Abu Bakar, Umar, Uthman, Ali), as well as senior *Sahaba*, all friends of the Prophet SAW, emulated the Sufi life. Also, when the Caliphate was in the hands of the corrupt nepotists Mu`awiyah and Abbasiyah, many scholars lived as Sufis, and finally, the teachings of this practice have strong roots in the Qur`ān and Hadith (Harun Nasution, 1990: 1-12).

In Indonesia, the Sufis are called experts as carriers of Islamic teachings in the Archipelago, and some scholars follow these teachings (Suryanegara, 1998: 160-161). Some Sufi figures in the modern era are KH Muhammad Munawar Affandi, Kiai Muhammad Anwar Muttaqin (Shattariah *Tariqa*) (Rahmat, 2018a), Abah Anom (TQN), Sheikh Abdul Wahab Rokan, and Sheikh Hasan Maksun (Naqshabandiyah *Tariqa*) (Ja'far, 2016). From the aspect of mass organizations, NU is known to develop *Tariqa*, unlike Muhammadiyah, which is Indonesia's second-largest Islamic organization, and does not develop this order but accepts Sufism (Maisyaroh, 2019). This organization, which wants to return Sufism to fit the Qur`ān and Sunnah, does not forbid this practice as the Salafī but wishes to prevent it from deviating from the path (Al-Kumayi, 2013).

3.2 PAI Learning Process with a Sufistic Approach

Before learning, most students were unaware of Sufism, and those that knew were mostly negative, while few were positive. PAI learning aims to make students understand the meaning of Sufism and improve the quality of their religion by teaching three themes. These themes were concerned with if meeting the conditions of harmony was enough or being devoted was the better way to pray. Also, they were regarding the definition of and practice of *dhikr* and the need for pupils to study with the *Murshid* or any cleric. A summary of the meaning of the three themes from the perspectives of Sufi and General Islam are in the following table:

Table 1. The PAI Material in view of Sufi and *Shari`a* Islam

| No | The PAI Material | Sufi Islam | <i>Shari`a</i> Islam (General Islam) |
|----|--------------------------|---|--|
| 1 | Khushu` Salat | <p>Sufi Islam has a method. <i>Shari`a</i> without essence is <i>fasiq</i>, which means disobeying Allah and His Messenger, while essence without <i>Shari`a</i> is <i>zindik</i> (<i>munafiq</i>). Both are bad.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Salat</i> must fulfill the conditions of harmony, which are to present Allah and remember Him throughout the prayer. Even outside, <i>Salat</i> also maintains these special conditions (Rahmat, 2010). • In the perspective of the <i>Tariqa</i>, <i>Salat</i> functions to connect the servant to God. It that presents the heart is the best <i>Salat</i> for <i>Tariqa</i> experts. The Prophet also reminded, “<i>La Salata illâ bi hudhûr al-qalb</i>, meaning there is no <i>Salat</i> without the presence of the heart.” <i>Salat</i> for <i>salikin</i> or <i>Tariqa</i> people is both an abortion and an enjoyment. Therefore, their lives seem intended for <i>Salat</i>, and they are serious about establishing the obligatory, circumcision, and evening <i>Salats</i> (<i>tahajud</i>). These people are so addicted to <i>Salat</i> and <i>dhikr</i> (Nasarudin Umar, 2014). • A hadith mentioned that other deeds will be checked after the <i>Salat</i> is correct. If the <i>Salat</i> is wrong, then other charities will be counted. If it is wrong and does not serve the purpose, which is remembering Allah, then it deletes the other deeds. <i>Salat</i> is like the number one (1) in front while other charities are like zero (0) at the back. Consequently, the zero behind will be valuable if one is in front of it but is worthless if followed by more zeros. The number 100 is valuable but 0,000,000,000,000, even if the zeros behind are as long as a railroad track, is worthless (Rahmat, 2010). • The purpose of <i>Salat</i> is <i>li al-dhikrî</i>, meaning “remembering” God (Q.S. Taha [20]: 14). If this is not fulfilled, then it means <i>sâhûn</i> or negligent and is threatened with hell (Q.S. al-Ma`un [107]: 4-5) (Qur`ân, 2013). | <p>General Islam emphasizes the implementation of worship by blending <i>Shari`a</i>. Some emphasize the essence while others do not.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NU emphasized the worship services by collecting <i>Shari`a</i> and the essence. According to NU, <i>Salat</i> is worship aimed at remembering Allah, as forgetting Him is a big mistake. According to the Word, “Do not be among those who forget” (Q.S. Al-A`raf [7]: 205). It is also addressed to those that pray only to meet the conditions and abort the obligations. Then, <i>Salat</i> is dry without the presence of the heart, and although the mouth looks busy, not a single <i>raka`at</i> is understood. Hence, the heart of such a person is filled with worldly problems. The Messenger of Allah said: “Allah does not look at the <i>Salat</i> of someone that does not present or concentrating with heart and body.” Even more, Allah SWT (Q.S. al-Maun [107]: 4-5) threatens those that pray in a state of neglect or emptiness, as this means that <i>Salat</i> is done without being accompanied by solemnity (NUonline, 2019). • According to Muhammadiyah, <i>Salat</i> is valid if it fulfills the conditions and harmony. These conditions include facing the Qibla, covering the genitals, and being pure from the <i>hadats</i> or uncleanness. Several pillars must be fulfilled during <i>Salat</i>, such as intention, <i>takbiratul ihram</i>, and reciting Surah Al-Fatihah on each <i>raka`at</i>. Others are bowing, <i>i`tidal</i>, and prostration with <i>tuma`ninah</i> or calm and peace, as well as sitting in between two prostrations. More pillars are sitting <i>tashahud</i> and reciting the <i>Salats</i> simultaneously, alongside reciting <i>Salat</i> to the Prophet and saying greetings. <i>Khushu`</i> in <i>Salat</i> is only the perfection of <i>Salat</i>, and not conditions or harmony. With the existence of <i>tuma`ninah</i> in performing the <i>Salat</i>, it is implied that these prayers can be done as well as possible, as an effort to achieve solemnity (Suara Muhammadiyah, 2019). |

2 Dhikr

Dhikr from the *Tariqa* perspective is to remember Allah in the heart. Meanwhile, the meaning in *Salat* is to remember and mention the name of God verbally and mentally.

- In the TQN order, *dhikr* is an oral and heartfelt activity that involves mentioning and remembering the names of Allah. There are two kinds, namely *jahr* or loud, by saying *Lā ilāha illā Allāh*, and *khafy*, meaning noiseless, performed by reciting *ism dzāt* (Allah, Allah, etc.) in the heart. *Dhikr* is only legitimate if it has been *talqin/berkah* or blessed by the *Murshid* teacher (Marwa Salahudin & Arkuni, 2016).
- The symbolic meaning of *dhikr* is that the nature of every work is part of remembering Allah, and remembrance is a pleasure because the mortality of life is felt. Other meanings are that the enjoyment gives birth to the tranquility of the soul and that the most important part is feeling *ma'rifatullah* or recognizing God (Izzah Faizah Siti Khaerania & Yuyun Nurlaen, 2019).
- The meaning of remembrance in Shattariah *Tariqa* is the recollection of conscience, spirit, and taste for the Substance of Allah, even though *Al-Ghāib*, the only thing that is unseen, is His Obligatory Form. "This is *Ana* (I am), My Name is Allah." Remembrance unites the core of a man, from which the seed of nature comes. The true essence of *dhikr* is not the *jahr* or chanting Allah's Name because that is the only known detail. Although the name is the same, it can do nothing. The one that can do anything is His *Musamma* or owner of the Name or Substance. To understand the Substance of Allah, experts, such as *ahl dhikr* and the *Wasithah* teacher must be asked (Rahmat, 2010).
- God should be remembered in the heart at the same time as inhaling. It is also advisable to practice breathing deeply and slowly while remembering God and then exhaling slowly. The commonly read devotions, including the *fardhu Salat* or obligatory prayers and *Tahajud Salat* in the Shattariah *Tariqa* are called *muqaddimah dhikr*. It also means *dhikr* after *fardhu* or *tahajud Salat* (Rahmat, 2010).

3 Murshid Teacher

Sufi Islam views the existence of the Shaykh or *Murshid* teacher as important.

- According to Imam Ghazāli, the guidance of a teacher is an absolute requirement for the successful development of any religion. Without it, a person will fall into error. The Imam further revealed that "someone without a teacher is the teacher" (Afandi, 2001; (Akmansyah, 2015).
- The existence of the *Murshid* teacher is to fulfill the commands of Allah, *Fas'alu ahl al-dhikr inkuntum la ta'lamun*. This means, "so ask the *Ahl al-dhikr* or expert in remembering God if you do not know Him" (Q.S. al-Nahl [16]: 43 & Q.S. al-Anbiya [21]: 7) (Al-Quran).

Dhikr of the general religious community refers to the meaning according to NU and Muhammadiyah.

- According to NU, the *dhikr* of Allah SWT has three categories. First, the *dhikr* of His Names is performed by those that are at the stage of seeking peace with Allah for all events related to themselves. Second, *dhikr* of His Nature, which is done by those that love Allah, and the third is of His Substance, which ignores all connections of the universe to Him.
 - The substance is only remembered with no physical or mental strings attached. Hence, every Muslim that *dhikr* will be inseparable from the three categories of remembrance (KH Said Aqil Siraj, 2013).
- Salat* and *dhikr* are highly recommended anytime and anywhere, even more so after the five daily prayers. *Dhikr* after *Salat* five times brings one closer to *ijabah*, which is granted by Allah. *Salat* and *dhikr* have their virtues in congregations. Rasulullah SAW mentioned angels, mercy, the emergence of peace, and praise of Allah SWT (NUonline, 2018).
- There are three kinds of *dhikr* regarding Muhammadiyah, which are of heart, tongues or oral, and limbs. *Dhikr* with heart concerns arguments about the Substance and attributes of God. It also involves arguments that show the burden or *taklif*, laws, commands, prohibitions, promises, and threats of Allah, as well as the secrets of His creation. *Dhikr* with tongues refers to praising Allah, glorifying, and reading the Qur'an, while that with limbs indicates the five daily *Salats*. The *Salat dhikr* is performed individually and in a low voice. Recitation in congregations is prohibited, except it has not been memorized, and the priest intends it as guidance (Pimpinan Pusat Muhammadiyah, 2017).

General Islam does not acknowledge the *Murshid* teacher but encourages people to practice Islam by referring to the *Ulama*.

- According to NU, the *Kiai* or *Ulama* are people that master the *Salaf* or previous *Ulama*, Al-Qur'an, and hadith books. Also, they serve as examples to the people, are accepted by the community, and have a religious-national commitment that is based on inclusive Islam. However, these people are not "*Kiai karbitan*" who only follow the tastes of the times and the capital market. This type of people are often found in electronic media, such as TV, radio, or the internet, as well as in print media, which includes newspapers, tabloids, or magazines. It is

Ahl al-dhikr is the *Murshid* teacher that became so because of a delegation received from the previous *Murshid* teacher that has a genealogy that continues to Rasûlullah SAW (Izzah Faizah Siti Khaerania & Yuyun Nurlaen, 2019).

- From the perspective of Shattariah *Tariqa* in Nganjuk, East Java), the *Murshid* or *Wasithah* teacher was the deputy or successor of Prophet Muhammad in continuing the mission and hard work. Therefore, there is only one *Wasithah* Teacher in every period. Al-Qur`ân calls it with various titles, among others. These include *Al-Wasîlata* or intermediary between the servant and God, as well as *Ahl al-dhikr*. They are also called *Waliyan Murshidan* or *Murshid* teacher, and *Imâmun Mubîn*, which means the Imâm that is present amid the Ummah (Rahmat, 2010).
- According to the TQN *Tariqa*, there can be several *Murshid* teachers in a period.
- also not “*Kiai Genetika*,” which is a *kiai* descendant considered as such because of parent-inherited charisma, even without an *Ulama* qualification (Romzi, 2012).
- According to Muhammadiyah, *Ulama* must have a science and moral qualification. From the scientific aspect, the Al-Qur`ân, authentic hadith, *ulum al-dîn*, Islamic, and contemporary thoughts should be properly understood. Also, the strategies and tactics of the struggle encountered should be comprehended and applied with wisdom. Additionally, the moral qualifications the *Ulama* must possess is fear of Allah, and not *hubb al-dunya* or love for the world, especially to the point of being insane or disrespectful (Isnanto, 2018).
- NU and Muhammadiyah have the same religious reference, which is the Qur`ân and authentic hadith. NU understands it through the *Salaf* books, especially from the Shafi`i *madhhab*, while Muhammadiyah directly refers to the two sources of Islam (Sembodo Ardi Widodo, 2011).

Before studying, students did not understand Sufism. Those who understand tend to be negative, seeing Sufism as a foreign influence. After studying the typology approach of the school, they understood that Sufism has strong roots from the main sources of Islam, the Qur`ân and hadith. Regarding *khushu`* prayer, some Islamic *shari`a* also requires it. Some others do not oblige, but see it as a good deed. Regarding *dhikr*, Islamic *shari`a* also obliges it. This means that these two teachings - *khushu`* prayer and *dhikr* - are not unique to Sufism. But the previous students didn't understand. After learning, students feel confident that *khushu`* prayer and *dhikr* are the main acts of worship in Islam.

Regarding the importance of studying from *Murshid*, Islamic *shari`a* does not recognize it at all. But there are basic equations that every Muslim needs to learn from the Ulema heir of the Prophet, do not just learn religion from anyone. Moreover, don't learn religion from social media whose identities are not clear, because these media contain intolerant Islamic teachings. After the lecture, students see the importance of studying from the *Murshid* Teacher or Ulema who inherits the Prophet.

4. Discussion

4.1 Discussion of the Pros and Cons of Sufism and *Tariqa*

The results of the literature study the pros and cons of Sufism and the *Tariqa*. While counter groups accuse Sufism of not originating from Islam, pro groups emphasize it as Islamic teachings. However, the influence of Sufism in Indonesia is difficult to stem because, first, NU as the largest Islamic mass organization practices it and supports *Tariqa*. It also has “Jam`iyyah Ahli al-Thariqah al-Mu`tabarah al-Nahdliyyah,” which is a *Tariqa* organization that coordinates the Sufi orders. Meanwhile, 45 *Tariqas* were declared *mu`tabarah* or valid (Kholid, 2018).

Second, there are two well-known figures of Sufism among Muslims, namely Sheikh Abdul Qadir Jailani, better known as *Sayyidul Auliya* or King of the Guardians, and Imam Ghazâli, also called *Hujjah al-Islam* or King of the *Ulamas* (Nadzירותul Masruroh, 2018). However, Al-Ghazâli became the *Murshid* Teacher (Afandi, 2001) and confirmed the guidance of a Shaykh as an absolute condition for the success of spirituality. “Therefore, a person will fall into error without the Shaykh” (Akmansyah, 2015).

Third, the *Tariqa* has a large following, as Shattariah *Tariqa*, which began in the XVII century AD had a big role in Indonesia. In 1886 AD *Kiai Hasan Ulama* established the first modern boarding school, which was followed by many *Ulama*. During the time of the 47th *Wasithah* Teacher, *Kiai Moh. Kusnun Malibari*, the Shattariah *Tariqa* had hundreds of huts and schools in Java and Sumatra (Rahmat, 2018a). At XIX, the Naqshbandiyah *Tariqa* dominated Muslim regions in Indonesia because the teachings were considered to be suitable by traditionalists (Hadarah & Gani, 2019; Noupal, 2016). Meanwhile, TQN has the most followers of the congregation (M. Rais Ribha Rifqi Hakim, 2018).

Fourth, Sufism has strong roots from the Qur`ân and Hadith (Harun Nasution, 1990: 1-12), fifth, *Tariqa*, such as TQN Suryalaya, show their outstanding achievements by healing narcotics victims (Dadang Muliawan, 2017). Finally, the

emptiness of life in the modern era drives people to glance at Sufism, and even Muhammadiyah intellectuals and figures have joined the *Tariqa*.

The Muhammadiyah organization rejects the *Tariqa* but runs a typical Sufism (Maisyaroh, 2019). Therefore, Sufism does not deviate from the path (Al-Kumayi, 2013), which seems to be a compromise of the pros and cons. The organization needed spiritual satisfaction to seek religious sensation (Khamami, 2016) and eventually accepted Sufism, such as increasing *Salat*, fasting, and reading the Qur`ān, but without *Tariqa* (Imam Masrur, 2019). Criticism of the *Tariqa* as an exclusive organization is indisputable, because every community must have an exclusive side (Fata, 2011). Meanwhile, senior professors at the Jakarta and Surabaya State Islamic Universities refuted minor views on Sufism and the *Tariqa* (Harun Nasution, 1990; Afandi, 2001: 9).

4.2 Discussion of Sufistic Aspects

The three aspects of the Sufism of thought, which are the obligatory *khushu` Salat*, the meaning and procedures of *dhikr*, as well as the need for a *Murshid* Teacher, are discussed as follows.

a. Discussion of the Obligation of *Khushu` Salat*

Before learning, most students did not understand the meaning and importance of the *khushu` Salat*, and in one class, only one or two understood and considered it important. Consequently, it was explained that the essence of *Salat* in Sufism is *khushu`*, which is to present God and remember Him during the prayers. This means that some special conditions need to be maintained until outside the *Salat*. Nasarudin Umar, a Sufism expert, emphasized that the *Salat* that presents the heart functions to connect the servant with God. The Sufi also quoted the Prophet's hadith, "*Lā shalāta illā bi hudhūr al-qalb*, which means "there is no *Salat* without the presence of the heart" (Nasarudin Umar, 2014). Hence, the Shattariah *Tariqa* emphasizes the order of the pillars of Islam. *Salat* can be solemn if the first pillar of Islam is correct, that is, it can "witness" the Divine Substance, and for this to occur, one must ask the expert or *Wasithah* teacher. After knowing the Divine Substance or *Ma`rifat bi Allāh*, one must continue to practice *dhikr* by presenting and remembering the Divine Substance, which is the best way to practice when establishing *Salat*. Therefore, *Tariqa* encourages followers to increase their *Salats* and observe 34-73 rak`aat in their daily lives. After this, the obligatory *Salat* or *tahajud* must always be performed with the *muqaddimah dhikr*, which is *dhikr* after Sunset and *Tahajud Salat*, that serves to improve the memory of the heart to God (Rahmat, 2010). Meanwhile, NU emphasizes the *khushu` Salat*, avoids the *sāhūn Salat* (NUonline, 2019), and develop *Tariqa* (Kholid, 2018). Muhammadiyah also considers the importance of solemn *Salat*, even though it is emphasized to achieve perfection (Suara Muhammadiyah, 2019).

The Prophet's hadith, "The first charity examined by Allah is *Salat*, and if it is good, true, and *khushu`*, then the other deeds are checked. But if it is bad, *sāhūn*, negligent, or does not remember Allah, then other deeds are thrown. Therefore, *Salat* is like the number one (1) in front and other charities are similar to zero (0) at the back, such that the number 100 is valuable, while 0,000,000,000,000 is worthless (Rahmat, 2010). During this illustration, some students showed their desire to offer a special *Salat*, and it was explained that the body and verbal practices perform the conditions of *Salat*, while having a heart of remembrance! A student asked, "Wow, this is very difficult! When *Salats* appear on things outside of God, such as remembering college assignments or lost items, etc., how should it be recited then?" The lecturer answered that "remembering God without the guidance of *Murshid* teacher is difficult, and this precise situation must make us aware that we are actually weak. Then, we should rise to ask God for forgiveness and guidance, and we may be forgiven and given instructions."

Sāhūn Salat is threatened with hell (Q.S. al-Ma`un [107]: 4-5), and it is no wonder that the threatened ones are those that do not pray. But this is precisely for al-mushallīn or people that are accustomed to praying, but usually offer *Salat* that is *sāhūn* (Rahmat, 2010). This explanation disturbed many students and made them ask for practical instruction to avoid *sāhūn Salat*. Then, the lecturer explained, "do what is first. With *Salat*, we stay away from immoral acts, get rid of inferiority, and grow wonderful qualities. Hopefully, someday, Allah enables us to pray *khushu`* and avoid *sāhūn Salat*."

b. Discussion of Meanings and Procedures of *Dhikr*

Before learning, almost all students interpreted remembrance as *wirid*, performed after obligatory *Salats*, such as forgiveness, *tasbih* or purifying Allah, *tahmid* or praise, *takbir* or glorification, prayers, and reading the Qur`ān. Only one or two students per class understood *dhikr* as remembering Allah. However, the meaning of remembering Allah from their perspectives was to call *Allāh* and *lā ilāha illā Allāh*, an understanding that was certainly better.

Then, the lecturer explained the importance of *dhikr*, which according to Q.S. al-A`raf [7]: 205 is a command to "*wadzkur rabbaka fī nafsika tadharru`an wa khifatan*," which means remember your Lord in your heart by humbling yourself and fearing Him." When worshiping Allah, e.g., when praying, God, who is to be worshipped, must be

presented first. Q.S. al-Hijr [15]: 99 says “*wa`bud rabbaka hattâ ya`tiyaka al-yaqîn,*” “meaning worship your Lord until you are sure that the God you worship is present,” because the purpose of *Salat* is to remember Allah. Furthermore, Q.S. Thâhâ [20]: 14 declares “*innanî anâ Allâh, lâ ilâha illâ anâ, fa`budnî, wa aqûmi al-shalâta li al-dzîkrî,*” which translates to “I am called Allah and there is no God besides Me. So, worship Me and establish *Salat* in remembrance of Me” (Rahmat, 2010). The remembrance of Allah in the heart is done during the Shattariah *Tariqa* together with breathing.

But what is the meaning of *dhikr*? Sufism and NU interpret it as a remembrance of Allah, and NU details three types, which are Asma or Name, Nature, and Substance (KH Said Aqil Siraj, 2013). Shattariah *Tariqa* interprets *dhikr* as remembrance of the Divine Substance (Rahmat, 2010), while *Asma* and Nature *dhikr*, which involve chanting the Name of Allah and His Attributes, are relatively easy. However, Substance *dhikr* is very difficult, because one must first *Ma`rifat bi Allâh* or know the Divine Substance. Practicing *Asma* and Nature *dhikr* alone is good, and in TQN, *dhikr* is a verbal and heartfelt activity that involves reciting Allah’s Name. There are two kinds of *dhikr*, which are *jahr* or loud, performed by reciting *Lâ ilâha illâ Allâh*, and *khafy*, which is of the heart and done soundlessly by reciting the *ism dzât*, such as Allah, Allah, etc. However, the TQN *dhikr* is only legal if it has been recited by the *Murshid* teacher (Marwa Salahudin & Arkuni, 2016).

A student asked, “I once read a text, which stated that the essence of *dhikr* is to fulfill God’s commands, just like a husband that remembers his wife and executes her message. When the husband brings something that was ordered by the wife, it means that he remembered her.” The lecturer responded with an illustration again. “If the husband brings her order, but his heart carries another woman, does he really remember his wife?” Some female students answered, “Wow, then he is an unfaithful husband!” which was the precise answer the lecturer had been waiting for. Therefore, performing God’s commands is one thing, and remembering Allah is another. The essence of worship is precisely remembering Allah and His Substance.

The lecturer further explained that Muhammadiyah meant *dhikr* by heart, oral, and of the limbs. *Dhikr* of the heart thinks of the postulates about the Substance of God, His attributes, commands, and the secrets of His creation. Oral *dhikr* involves praising Allah, glorifying, and reading the Qur’an. while *dhikr* of the body is a five-time *Salat* (Pimpinan Pusat Muhammadiyah, 2017). Therefore, it is possible to choose the meaning and practice of the *dhikr* that pleases a person.

Is the *dhikr* done individually or in congregations? Sufism and NU emphasize the good *dhikr* in congregation, although an individual performance is permissible. However, Muhammadiyah forbids *dhikr* in congregation and only allow it if the imam aims to teach it to pilgrims (Pimpinan Pusat Muhammadiyah, 2017). It is allowed to choose the way of *dhikr* that pleases one but the most important thing is that the *Salat* and other activities are not finished without *dhikr* first.

Dhikr with concentration when remembering God corresponds with the construction of Sufistic reasoning, which has four characteristics. These are making God the center, paying close attention to sincerity and special aspects, building religious affective and taste-based models with a spirit of moral enhancement and nobility of character. The last one is construction through inclusive and tolerant religious understanding (Futaqi, 2018). *Dhikr* practiced by remembering Allah while holding one’s breath also corresponds with modern psychology. Conscious breathing is performed to find a feeling or *dhawq* that leads to comfort and inner peace. *Dhawq* can help people to know themselves, as well as acknowledge their weaknesses and shortcomings, to recognize the majesty and glory of God, approach, and grow in love for Him. First, breathing awareness is practiced meditatively and then improved by making it a means of physical and mental health, as well as a spiritual gain. Hence, the breath of consciousness is an essential exercise that culminates in the Creator (M. Iqbal Irham, 2016).

Dhikr is the method Sufi scholars employ to revive a dead heart by remembering Allah. It makes people aware of the existence of their Lord, because the essence is to witness the existence of Allah SWT. Meanwhile, *jahr dhikr* or *khafy* is done individually or in congregations (Faisal Muhammad Nur, 2017).

c. Discussion of the Need of a *Murshid* Teacher

Although almost none of the students knew *Murshid* teachers existed before learning, they were aware of the need to learn religion from scholars. However, they did not know the criteria of *Ulama* and for them, all preachers are *Ulama*, and often referred to figures as such, especially those that were well-known preachers and from social media. Most students liked the cleric or preacher under their religious mindset, which was brought from their families and social-religious environments.

The lecturer explained that there was only one reference in that time, which was the Prophet, and the companions only used the Qur'an and the Prophet's words when they were far from one another. With this reference, they often disagreed in that time, just like in today's world, but had one opinion after receiving explanations from the Prophet. Currently, the figure that can replace the Prophet's position as a religious reference or act as a substitute according to Sufism views is the *Murshid* teacher. Unlike the general *Ulama*, the *Murshid* teacher has a genealogy that can be linked to the previous Teacher and to the Prophet Muhammad. Although the agreed function is as an expert in *dhikr*, the role of this teacher in each *Tariqa* is different. In the Shattariah *Tariqa*, the *Wasithah* Teacher is the Prophet's representative or successor, meaning that there is only one *Wasithah* Teacher in every age. However, in other *Tariqas*, such as in TQN, there may be more than one *Murshid* Teacher. The importance of this teacher was shown by al-Ghazali, a Grand Shaykh or *Hujjah al-Islam* that studied with a *Murshid*. This Imam emphasized, "The guidance of a Shaykh or *Murshid* teacher is an absolute requirement for the success of religious development and without it, one will fall into error. Anyone that does not have a Shaykh is the teacher (A. K. Afandi, 2001); Akmansyah, 2015).

A student asked, "Why is the existence of the *Murshid* teacher unpopular? Is this proof that the scholars did not learn from the *Murshid*?" The lecturer explained, "That is wrong! The proof is that al-Ghazali, Ibn Arabi, as well as UIN professors like Harun Nasution and Azyumardi Azra studied with the *Murshid*. However, NU and Muhammadiyah emphasize the need to study with clerics that originate from the Prophet" (Romzi, 2012); (Isnanto, 2018). "Please, you are free to choose a view that is stronger and exhibits common sense."

4.3 Discussion on Model Effectiveness

PAI learning with a Sufi approach has proven effective in increasing students' understanding of Islam-Sufism, improving the quality of their diversity, and building religious tolerance. Before learning, students were generally unaware about Islam-Sufi and those that were mostly rejected it, while only a small proportion was accepting. However, after the six face-to-face lesson sessions, most students accepted it, and even a small proportion planned to practice it. After the study, most of the respondents thought that Sufism had a strong base in Islam.

The Sufistic approach can be said to be a learning model. Abas Asyafah explained that this model was generally viewed as a theoretical representation that is complex, broad, and deep into a concept that is simpler and easier to understand (Asyafah, 2014). Therefore, the developed approach has succeeded in simplifying the theory of Sufism and the *Tariqa*, which were complex, broad, and deep into a simpler concept.

The results of this research reinforce the findings of previous studies. These are, first, the Sufi Islamic approach has succeeded in increasing substantive-religiosity, noble morals, and religious tolerance at the Takeran *Pesantren*, which is the pioneer of modern Islamic boarding schools, founded by Kiai Hasan Ulama in 1886 AD (Rahmat, 2018a). Second, the approach has been proven to be successful in increasing the noble morals of students (Rahmat *et al.*, 2016), particularly in enhancing their honesty (Rahmat & Yahya, 2020). More broadly, the superiority of the *madhhab* typology method has increased students' understanding and acceptance of other religions and Islamic schools (Rahmat, 2018b), including NU-Muhammadiyah (Rahmat & Fahrudin, 2018) and Shia Islam (Rahmat *et al.*, 2020). Hence, the *madhhab* typology method has enhanced students' understanding and religious tolerance of different Islamic schools. Particularly, the Sufistic approach or typology of Sufi-Islamic *Shari'ah* schools, has succeeded in improving the quality of substantive and tolerant diversity.

5. Conclusion

Sufism has a fertile place in Indonesia, and a contributing factor is that NU practices Sufism and supports the *Tariqa*, while Muhammadiyah performs typical Sufism to improve the quality of religion. The two Sufi figures, Sheikh Abdul Qadir Jailani and al-Ghazali are very popular. Also, Sufism has a strong basis from the Qur'an and Hadith, and the *Tariqa* has a large following. The achievements of the *Tariqa* were brilliant in healing victims of drugs, and the void of life caused by modernization drives people to glance at Sufism. Meanwhile, many intellectuals even from the Muhammadiyah group joined the *Tariqa*, hence, it is appropriate to use this approach for PAI learning in universities. Finally, the results show the effectiveness of the Sufistic approach in increasing student acceptance of Sufism, the practice of higher quality Islam, and religious tolerance. The implication is that the Sufistic learning model is an alternative in learning Islamic education at universities.

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